

CLAIMS

1 1. A method for identifying to a user an availability of members through their
2 contact devices, comprising:

3 storing a profile on each member, the profile identifying at least one contact device for
4 each member;

5 providing information on the profile for each member to the user; and

6 tracking a communications presence of the contact device for each member, the tracking

7 including determining the availability of the contact device for each member.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising allowing the user to initiate
communications with the member through the contact device.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a notification that the
contact device associated with each member is active.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising connecting the user to the member
having the active contact device.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing a communications circle of
members for each user.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the availability of the contact
2 device comprises querying the contact device.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the availability of the contact
2 device comprises querying a network provider associated with the contact device.

1 8. The method of claim 2, wherein allowing the user to initiate communications
2 with the contact device comprises connecting the user to the contact device.

1 9. The method of claim 2, wherein allowing the user to initiate communications
2 with the contact device comprises sending a message to the contact device.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein storing the profile comprises enabling a
2 plurality of contact devices to be stored for each member.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein storing the profile comprises storing addressing
2 information for each contact device.

1 12. A system for facilitating communication between a user and members of a
2 communications circle, comprising:
3 a database for storing profiles of all members of the communications circle, each profile
4 identifying at least one contact device for each member; and

5 a communications server for retrieving the profile from the database and for determining

6 an availability of the contact device for each member in the communications circle, the

7 communications server providing the profile and information on the availability of the contact

8 device to the user upon request;

9 wherein, from the profile and the information on the availability of the user, the user can

10 initiate contact with any one of the members in the communications circle.

1 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the database stores a code number for

2 correlating the profile and communications circle information of the members.

14. The system of claim 12, wherein the information on the availability of the

contact device indicates if the contact device is active.

15. The system of claim 12, wherein the profile includes an address for the contact

device.

16. The system of claim 12, wherein the communications server connects the user to

one of the members in the communications circle.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the communications server connects the user to

the one member of the communications circle through the Internet.

1 18. The system of claim 16, wherein the communications server connects the user to

2 the one member of the communications circle through an email message.

1 19. The system of claim 16, wherein the communications server connects the user to

2 the one member of the communications circle through a page sent to the one member.

1 20. The system of claim 16, wherein the contact device of the one member

2 comprises a wireless device and the communications server connects the user to the one

3 member of the communications through a wireless network.

1 21. The system of claim 16, wherein the one member of the communications server

2 has an interactive television and the communications server connects the user to the interactive

3 television of the one member.

1 22. The system of claim 16, wherein the one member of the communications circle

2 has a personal computer with access to the Internet through an internet service provider and the

3 communications server connects the user to the personal computer of the one member.

1 23. The system of claim 16, wherein the communications server connects the user to

2 an Internet appliance of the one member of the communications circle.

1 24. An interface for being provided to a user to display communications presence

2 information on a user's communications circle, comprising:

3 a communications section for displaying the members of the user's communications

4 circle, each member in the communications circle having at least one contact device through

5 which each member may communicate with the user; and

6 a profile section for displaying profile information on each member of the

7 communications circle, the profile information identifying each member, listing contact devices

8 associated with each member, and displaying an availability of each of the contact devices;

9 wherein the user is able to determine which contact device is available by viewing the

10 profile information on the members of the communications circle and can initiate contact with

11 any member having an available contact device.

1 25. The interface of claim 24, wherein the communications section displays a name

2 of each member in the communications circle.

1 26. The interface of claim 24, wherein the communications section displays the

2 contact devices associated with each member of the communications circle.

1 27. The interface of claim 24, wherein the communications section has a link for

2 allowing the user to view the profile section.

1 28. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface includes the profile section for

2 each of the members in the communications circle.

1 29. The interface of claim 24, wherein the profile section address information for the

2 contact devices associated with each member and the availability of each contact device.

1 30. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface further includes a contact section

2 for allowing the user to communicate with an available contact device in the user's

3 communications circle.

1 31. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display on a personal

2 computer.

1 32. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display on a wireless

2 device.

1 33. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display through a pager.

1 34. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display through a wireless

2 telephone.

1 35. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display on an interactive
2 television.

1 36. The interface of claim 24, wherein the interface is for display on a personal
2 digital assistant.